

## **Esther Campbell**

Tape #34

Interviewed by Mike Brown, 1977.

Mike Brown (MB): Well, you've lived here for years.

Esther Campbell (Esther): Just since '65, about twelve years we've lived down on this place. The rest we were up on Douglas Mountain. Since about '26. Of course, we lived up there just during the summers because I'd go away to teach just about every winter. We spent some winters up there. They were nice winters. It's nice up there on the mountain in the winter. It was the south slope and the elevation was about like Greystone up on top of the mountain there, on the south slope. The sun would shine every day and, if it did snow a little, the sun would melt it off and little water trickles every day just about, so it was pleasant up there.

MB: Where are you from originally?

Esther: I was born in Minnesota, then I came to Denver about 1919 after I graduated. Came to Denver and took a business course. I had taught one year in Minnesota and I decided maybe a business course would be better, so I worked at that for about a year and didn't like it and went to teaching again. Didn't care too much for that kind of work in town. I wanted to get out again. So, I've been teaching off and on, not really steady, but since 1917. That was my first year of teaching.

MB: Were you in Minnesota then?

Esther: In Minnesota for the first year, then came out here. So, I taught fifty years in Moffat County.

It's been fifty years since I came to Moffat County. I didn't have quite fifty years of experience in the county. But in '72 some of my pupils, the first pupils I had in Moffat County, was down here over at Stoke Creek, and the first pupils I had that year decided to have a reunion picnic, school reunion. So they called it the Grand Jubilee School Reunion Picnic and invited all the pupils I had had in the fifty years of teaching to come to our picnic. We had that in '72. I think we had about 112 people here. No, see, 145 I believe it was. We had 212 enrolled. That doesn't sound like very many for fifty years, but in a rural school we had the same ones year after year.

If you stay in the same schools, same area, very long, why, you have the same pupils and all the members of the family, and so you get to be pretty well acquainted with all of them. You feel, really, like they're almost your own, having them that long. So, in all there were about 212 names, and we located most of them, addresses, and sent them invitations. So, of course, they couldn't all come. Some came from California, Oregon, Texas. One girl came from Texas by herself. She had her little girl and little boy with her, but nobody to help change tires if something should happen. She came alone from Midland, Texas. I had had her in school since she started in

kindergarten, and I finished her in the 8th grade, so she's practically mine.

I feel very close to my pupils because I did have them so many years in succession sometimes, the second generation in the same family. So they all, most of them, still keep in touch with me and come to visit me and it just means so much to me to have them come to see me. Almost every weekend somebody comes, or sometimes, during the summer, they come to see me that live fairly close. Had two girls come from Powder Wash up in Rock Springs, one lives in Rock Springs now, last Sunday. Another boy from the same school came the day before, so they come to see me quite often. Keep in touch with them, write letters to them and so on.

MB: Did the Chews ever go to your school?

Esther: No, that was before we came here. They went to school in the Park. That was before I came out.

MB: How did you meet your husband?

Esther: Well, I came to Skull Creek to teach. You know where Skull Creek is? Over there on Hwy 40? It's between Maybell and Jensen, you might say. At that time, it was in 1922, at that time there wasn't any paved highway, just a dirt road. I came out to teach the Skull Creek School. No conveniences like they have now in school. I had to build the fire. I had to build my own fires and do my own janitor work. Of course, and we had to have a wood contract. In fact, the boy that had the wood contract that year came to our reunion that we had this year. We had another for five years later, this summer, and his daughter that I had had in school came from California, and her father came with her to this picnic, so he dates back to 1922. But just a little rural school, had all the grades and some of them, not very many of those are still living. We had about fifteen in school, I think, that year, and there are only two that I'm sure of that are still living of that group. They are the ones that made up this picnic five years ago, and their daughter kind of made this one up this summer and carried it on the same as before.

MB: Were you the only teacher?

Esther: In that school, yes. I have had just one, two-teacher school where I've been teaching. That was over at Powder Wash, on the line between Wyoming and Colorado, an oil camp. That was the only two-teacher school I ever taught. All the rest were just the one teacher in the school.

MB: Is that school still there?

Esther: The Powder Wash? That's the last school I had; it's still there. They're having school there.

They have only one room there now. I think they've transported the others away to Rock Springs or Craig to go to high school. I had the lower room over there. And as far as these rural schools,

there's only one rural school in Moffat County, that's down here in Brown's Park. It's the only one that's still running.

MB: Do they have many students?

Esther: Well, they did start out with about fourteen, I think, but two families have moved away since then. So I believe she has only seven now. But she has the seven grades, one in each grade.

MB: That's something that's really disappearing.

Esther: Yes. They're trying to get them into the town schools. But when you're this far out, it's hard to transport them that far. You can't transport them, you just have to send them in and let them board with someone and that isn't always very satisfactory. Or they have to move in for the winter, and that certainly isn't very good where, on a ranch, you'd have to leave the husband alone here on the ranch, probably, and the wife go in and stay in town. So it's kind of a hard proposition that way. So, it's there or transport them wherever they can. But even that's kind of pretty far sometimes.

MB: Did you have, like, a school bus or anything?

Esther: No.

MB: How did the kids get back and forth?

Esther: Well, they have a school bus now down here, it's sort of a school bus. They get the parents to kind of pool them, the rides, and different parents would drive each week. That's the way it was before. But this year there's only one family from up at this end, so they have to drive all the time. Then they used to have one from the top of Cold Spring Mountain up there, when the Dickensons and Buckleys lived up there. But there's no one coming from up there now, I don't think. So, they, just the families, take them to school. But when I was teaching down here, in other schools, they've all been close enough that they could come. Sometimes, some of them would ride horseback to school, but schools were a little closer in that day and they could go to the closest one.

When I was down here the last few years, in the Brown's Park area down here, we had an extra school building, some buildings that the school district took over, a couple of log houses, and one school building they moved down there on the place. They did have a little "teach-reach" that we lived in. So, the different families moved into these other buildings and would stay through the week and go home on weekends. So, that worked out pretty well. The last year I

was there was 1949, a hard winter. You've probably heard about the hard winter of '49 in this country.

MB: No, I haven't.

Esther: The snow got so deep that the roads were just tunnels. It got so high that the bulldozers, and maintainers and tractors couldn't push it back any further so they had to go outside and make new

roads wherever it was possible. They had to, even up there at Maybell, on the main highway, 'course they had the rotary where they could till the snow out. Well, the wall of the snowbank there was about twice as high as your head. You couldn't throw it over. They did up there, but they didn't have any such equipment down here. But I have pictures to show how deep the snow was up there at Maybell.

There were several times it snowed in up there, the tourists were snowed in and couldn't go on until the roads were cleared up. Maybell was full of people that had to make room for them overnight.

Down here, it got so snowy, so deep and so drifting... Well, it started between Christmas and New Year's, and that's when all the children were home for Christmas vacation. And it came just between there so that they couldn't, any of them, come back to school after New Year's, for about three days 'til they opened things up. Then all the rest of the period, it lasted until about the middle or last of February, and they had to just travel in convoys up the road. There would be ten to fifteen cars follow behind a bulldozer and sometimes the last car would be stuck and have to shovel out. It would drift in ahead of it before the last one could come through. So it was a bad winter for the time it lasted. It was as high as the houses in some places, the drifts were.

MB: You know, I'd always heard since I've been living here, that Brown's Park was noted for it's mild winters.

Esther: Yes, it has been. They call it the Banana Belt. It usually had nice, mild winters, even back in

the old days. They had some hard winters, I think. 1928 was another hard winter when so many of

their cattle were killed here. But this winter was very unusual for these days out here. The mail would come see, we have mail twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays the mail would come out, say, on Monday, and it would take them until Thursday to get back to Maybell to pick up the next mail. They'd go just as far as they could one day and stay all night with a family and then go on, probably get back by the next mail day. If not, we had to wait a week sometimes. So it was a bad winter, but it did let up about the middle of February.

Every week the children would go home on weekends and that weekend it would storm again and they couldn't get back to school until about Wednesday. It just upset things for the time

being while that was going on. That's when they had the buildings fixed for them to stay in them. They could stay until Friday again, by that time the roads were open, and they would go home,

thinking that was the end of the storm probably, but some more would come. But that was sort of a queer sort of snow. I never saw any like it. As deep as it was, it never made any mud when it melted. I don't know what happened.

MB: Was it deep, powdery?

Esther: It must have been powdery and dry. It didn't make any mud or running water.

MB: It's too bad you didn't have skis or something.

Esther: Just cleared up all at once.

MB: Do you ever have problems with flooding or anything like that?

Esther: No, not any more. They used to have, I think. But now, since the dam is built, they control

the river. It gets low, but it never gets more than a certain height. I have a pump out here on the river and it just gets it to the platform of that. It does now. We had to raise it six inches to keep it from running into the pump; but that's about as high as they let it go now, when they let it out so much all summer to go down to the dam at Lake Powell.

MB: Did people ever talk about floods before they put that dam in?

Esther: There would be high water times, but I don't think it really flooded. An old-timer that used

to stay here, he was an old prospector and he lived here at that time, he was hunting an old mine at the foot of the mountain. He came out every year, every summer for about forty summers hunting that mine never did locate it. But he used to camp here on this place and had to cross with a boat. But he said the water came up to where my fence is out here now, the edge of the lawn. So, he would have to cross in a boat and then walk up.

MB: Who was he?

Esther: His name was Mark Taylor. He is mentioned in this book, Dick Dunning's book I think, in 247 and 274 maybe.

MB: Who was Jim?

Esther: Apache Jim was supposed to be a professional treasure hunter. He came here one day with

another old-timer from Vernal, he passed away two years ago or so, Jim Nickels, and Jim Nickels

used to be here in this area, I guess, forty years ago or so and he came here. He couldn't believe this was the Jarvie place. No trees then. Everything had grown up and looked so different to him,

couldn't believe it was the same place. Well, he brought this Apache Jim along because he thought that Jarvie had buried treasures around here, had money or something buried around here, and Apache Jim was supposed to be able to find these things. He had a metal detector that would work down pretty deep, I think, and he had another one for shallow stuff. So, they worked together and looked all over the place here, didn't find anything but old shells and nails and things that didn't amount to much. No treasure.

We do have a rock I've always called my treasure, rock that I found up when we lived up on Douglas Mountain. We'd bought a round water trough. We wanted to set it in up above, by the spring, below the spring above the house. So I went with Duward one day to get that set and so the water could run into it and fill it, and we were leveling it up. He was shoveling and leveling and he said, "Go up to the ditch here a little ways and you'll see kind of an overhanging rock." It wasn't a cave exactly, but just about a little lower than my head. I'd have to stoop over and look in there and there was some ledge rocks, just flat rocks in there in layers. He said, "Bring some of those flat rocks down to level this up with."

So, I went up there and I found the place and got a hold of the top rock and kind of loosened it and pulled it out and it was such a nice smooth flat rock, not very thick, and I thought, "That's too nice to put under that trough, I'll put it in my sidewalk." I was trying to build a flagstone walk from the house out, and so I turned it over to see how it was on the other side. There was pencil writing. Pretty clear at that time. I've been trying to keep it from being rubbed off, but I've had it now for many years. We never could read it and figure it out, but up in the upper left corner it said 1870. Then just sort of below that was a picture of an Indian head, kind of the order of the Indian head on a penny with the feathers. Then across the top and sort of sloping down over the end it said, "treasure buried in the..." The next word was sloughed off, just peeled off. So we didn't know, still couldn't tell what it meant. But that's what the words looked like and then there were other words that showed up at that time, one was squint and another little circle, two circles with crosses in the circles.

We tried to figure out in different ways where that would be, but we didn't have Geiger counter, metal detectors or anything. But one day I got a hunch that maybe that Indian head on the rock meant the same as the rock we had over on the ridge. Just above the house over toward the west was a rock that looked like the profile of an Indian, and they might have drawn that to represent that certain rock. So, we figured maybe the treasure was up there. We went up there and looked, but couldn't find anything. But when this professional Apache Jim came, we showed him the rock and he took pictures of it. He had a very good camera, took several shots of it from different angles in different light and promised to come back and get us and we'd go up to Tepee and hunt up the treasure. But he didn't ever come back. We heard later he went down to Glade Ross at the Gates of Ladore and asked him how to get up to Tepee. So, I think he went up and found it himself. But we've never found where it was or found out anything about it.

MB: What is Tepee?

Esther: Tepee was our ranch up on Douglas Mountain. It's called Tepee Springs, that's where

Queen Anne herded bulls in the early days. She herded bulls for all the cattlemen down here. So, the next summer this Jim Nickels that brought him over in the first place came back to see me and said he had another fellow with him. He said, "We came over to see your treasure." I said, "I haven't treasure, never got any treasure." He said, "Well, we heard Apache Jim dug up the treasure up here in the draw up here. I think it was the draw east of Sears Canyon, and he got, I believe, \$7,000 cash out of a grave." He said that he told us, he came back to Vernal and he told them that he got \$7,000 out of that and \$11,000 out of Tepee and gave me half of it. So, he wanted to see the treasure. But he didn't give me any.

MB: Was that quite a while ago that transpired?

Esther: Not too long ago, about, maybe, five years.

MB: So is he still around then, Apache Jim?

Esther: Well, his home is supposed to be in Colorado Springs, but I don't know where he is now. I haven't heard of him in later years.

MB: That's quite possible what you're saying, that he found that.

Esther: You know, in that day, Tepee was supposed to be an old hideout for the outlaws up there, too, and they took lots of their treasure up there from the railroad holdups and robberies that they pulled off in earlier times and they buried them up on the mountain. Tepee was one of their popular places. We didn't ever find any of them, of course, but there's several stories about treasures at that time.

I know one summer they were all hunting treasure. Elza Lay was supposed to have something buried down in the canyon, that would be down in Yampa Canyon, below Tepee Springs, we called it Tepee Hole. We could see tracks, foot tracks, of people walking down the canyon and we were puzzled. We didn't know what it was for quite a while, and we had seen people at a distance walking. But we didn't ever go up to them to ask what they were doing or anything. But we found out later that they were hunting Elza Lay's treasure by a map. And I think they found it, because we found a certain place that had been dug up down there.

Then the same summer, there was another place over on what they call Whiskey Springs, west of our place, and that had been dug up by a map, according to a map, because it was just a square hole dug and went half way into a big salver berry bush, so it must have been according to some directions or they wouldn't have bothered that salver berry bush, as hard as they are to dig in to. So we don't know what they got or if they got anything.

That same summer, too, over in the Sand Wash country that's over the hill over here, a big kind of a badlands country, that's where the outlaws used to hide out, too, over in there, they called it Powder Wash Camp or something--Powder Springs--that was one of their hideouts. But when Jack Langley lived over in Sheephead Basin, that's the other side of that rim there toward this outer edge of the Sand Wash Country, some people came by one day and wanted to know how to get to G Springs, I think it was. See, what they wanted, that was another place that the outlaws would stay quite a bit was G Springs. They used the spring, they would hide in there and water their horses and so on. He told them how to get there and they came with a horse and

buggy and wanted to know how to get over there. So he told them how to get there, but didn't think much about them until a few weeks later.

He went over by that way when he was riding for his cattle and he found where they'd dug up something over there. He found the hole that they had dug out and two empty buckets with marks of the coins in the bottom of the bucket. They'd thrown the buckets away and taken the coins. So, he salvaged the two buckets and took them home and we did see them. So, we know he found it, but we don't know how much treasure they found or whose it was. Who had hidden it.

MB: You know, the people that even find it, they have to be careful about even saying anything.

Esther: Yes, they wouldn't. I don't suppose they could keep it even if they let the government know.

MB: If its gold, I think all gold belongs to the government.

Esther: It's supposed to be turned in, so I don't know what they found, gold coins or what, but it probably was. I really don't know what good it would do them. They couldn't gain any out of them.

MB: Oh, maybe they would sell one here and there. How did you happen to come over here to Brown's Park?

Esther: When I came to Skull Creek to teach, we stayed up on Blue Mountain for a couple of summers and took care of cattle for Willis Johnson, he was a cattleman up on Blue Mountain. Then we'd go down to Vernal for the winters. But in the summer, we could look over the rim of Blue across the canyon...

## SIDE TWO

...we could look over the rim and see the Douglas Mountain over here had pines on it and it looked like good country to us. We were still hunting a place that we could call home. One day a fellow from over here came to stay all night with us. His name was Charlie Clawson, he told about his homestead over here on Douglas Mountain. We asked him if he would sell it and he said yes he would, he thought he would sell it. But, of course we hadn't seen it. So one day we saddled up our horses and rode around. We had to go up around the Sunbeam and back down the road this way.

We had quite a time finding Douglas Mountain, finding the place on the mountain. Different people tried to tell us, but no one seemed to know exactly, or they were afraid to tell us because just at that time there had been another thing going on here in the country. Ed Bassett and some of the fellows had pulled off a cattle robbery, cattle stealing of some kind, and Ed Bassett had killed himself. The story was that he had confessed and killed himself for the crime, but the Bassett family and different people thought that probably he was forced to kill himself.



He signed this note saying that he took the blame and that set the others free and they figured that they shot him. That had just come of here in this country. So, they were suspicious of us, they thought we were FBI agents. They didn't want to tell us anything.

So, we finally found the place, and we went up there and it looked like just about what we wanted. We had pines and aspens and cedars and pinions and so on, pretty little valley and the rocks around us. So, we tried to find Clawson to tell him we wanted to buy it and he had disappeared. All of these people connected with that robbery were gone. So, we just moved over anyway, we loaded up in our wagon and pulled our stuff over. There was no road up there, we just had to pull through the rocks and up there the best way we could. Sort of a trail was all there was. So we stayed there that summer, went away again for the winter, but we didn't get ahold of Clawson for about another year after that, to make out papers to buy the place. We bought it and proved up on some more land around it so we had about 960 acres altogether.

MB: You were homesteading then?

Esther: We homesteaded, yes. His was a homestead, but only 320 acres, and we got another 640. So, it made 960 acres up there. So, that was when we first went over there, when all that was going on and everybody was suspicious of everybody else. We had fifteen head for about three years, old steers that we brought over with us, that we had just bought; and we were afraid to let them out. We were just as afraid as the other people were. We didn't know what had gone on or who was hiding around in the rocks, so we didn't let them out of our sight hardly. We rode around them and brought them in every night, and we didn't spread out very big the first summer. But when things blew away, why we spread out and put in some fences and we got the BLM lease permits down on the river for the cattle in the wintertime. It was pretty good winter country down there on the river.

MB: Did you ever have any trouble with sheep?

Esther: No, no sheep up there because that place, that's why we liked it, it was isolated and nobody else could come in there on us. It was just more or less naturally fenced with ledges and canyons and so on so nobody bothered us at all—even other cattle. It was a very good place for that reason.

MB: Did you build your herd up?

Esther: Yes, not a very large herd, we had about a hundred head is all.

MB: Did the Depression affect you much?

Esther: Not too much, of course. Well, that one year they condemned a lot of the sheep and cattle that one year because the prices were so low and feed was short, so they condemned so many and we had to sell them pretty cheap or kill them off.

MB: Was that that cattle-killing program?

Esther: Yes, and sheep. They killed off lots of sheep and cattle. But it didn't hurt us too much because we had our own private range and we could winter them out, so I don't think we had to kill any of ours. I don't remember that we did. We had our range and kept them down in the canyon for winters and we raised a little hay, not very much, but when it was necessary we could feed some that were thin and weak.

It was this Tepee place up there, what we call Tepee, that was Queen Anne's bull camp, she called it. About 1908, 1909, no 1904, she was up there through 1908, she was up there about four years, the cattlemen in the Park area for the summer would have to pasture their bulls out, that is until they were ready to turn them into herds. So, she herded all the bulls for everybody in the country up at Tepee and they paid her a dollar a month a head for all their bulls. So, she was making, she herded about 200-250 bulls, so she was making pretty good money for that day. When the cowboys and everybody else was getting about \$30 a month, she was getting \$250. She said her brothers didn't pay her in money, but they would give her maybe a silver-mounted bridle or silver-mounted spurs or something like that, so she made quite a bit that way.

She told us some of her experiences with her bull herding. This Tepee Springs, where she kept them for night, they built large corrals there from the quaky poles. And there were several different pens so that some of them had to be shut up in different pens for the night because they were fighting bulls and kind of mean. She would have to separate them from the rest. Then she just lived in a little tent up there down by the spring. But she would get up pretty early in the mornings to turn the bulls out to graze, she wouldn't stop to eat breakfast, she said, she would just put a handful of raisins in her pocket and rode off to turn her bulls out. She would turn them down the valley where she could watch them, and then she had a certain place on top of the ridge where she could go up. A certain pine log, fallen tree, that she would go up to during the day, where she could look over the country. She could look down the valley and look down Brown Draw and see if other herds were coming in to mix with her bulls. So, she would go up there everyday and spend most of the day up on this ridge and watch on all sides from up there.

While she was up there, she would write her diary. She kept her diary and she wrote it in a book and then kept the book in a lard can, lard bucket. She called it Cotalina Lard, it's an old-time brand, you can't buy it now, I don't suppose, and then put the book in the bucket and hung the bucket in the pine tree. Then the next day, she would come up and add some more to her diary, tell of her experiences every day.

In 1908, they called her to appear in court up at Hahn's Peak, that's when Routt County and Moffat County were all one before they divided them; and the county seat was at Hahn's Peak. So in her hurry to leave, she had to get out of there pretty quick and get up there to stand trial, she forgot to bring her diary with her, so it was up there for several years. She didn't get to go back and well, it's still there as far as anybody knows. I think it's been found, too.

In 1949 I was teaching down here in Browns Park and someone came to the door, knocked on the school house door. A very stately nice looking woman and she said, "Is this Mrs. Campbell?" And I said, "Yes." She said, "Is Duward home?" I said, "No, he went to town today, but he'll be back this evening." She said, "I don't suppose you know who I am?" I said, "Well, no, not really, but," I said, "I have a hunch you're Anne Bassett." And why I had it was just from the description I think that Duward had given me. And she said, "Well, you're right."

She visited a little and wanted us to come over to her camp. She has her camp down here, she did have, and she would come out once in a while in the summer and stay. It still is in the Bassett name, supposed to always remain in the Bassett name. It's in Emerson Bassett's name now, and that is her nephew. We went over then that evening, I think, after Duward came back from town. We visited with her, talked, she told us what she was out here for. She came to find that bucket with her diary in it and it had been 40 years since she left it.

We planned then for the next weekend to go back up to Tepee and get horses. It was in the spring when we had some horses up there already gathered in, and we went up there in our cars and then went down and got horses to ride, and we rode right up to her log where she used to sit. She led us right up there; she knew just exactly where it was. We looked for the bucket, but it

was gone. We looked all over, through the pine needles and pine cones, and where we thought maybe it had rolled off over the edge of the hill, but we couldn't find it. But she wanted it that summer for the purpose of getting some information out of it that she needed in writing her life story. She was writing her life story for the Colorado State Magazine. She wanted those few years. She had kept a diary ever since she was old enough to write, I think, so she had most of the material she wanted; but she wanted just those few years in between there, but she didn't find it so she had to make up her story without it.

We heard in years after, after Anne had gone, we heard that probably it was that book that was found. The people, the cowboys down at the Smelter Ranch, it's just below Tepee on the north side of the mountain, they found a bucket up there. They claimed they found the bucket with the diary in it. Duward happened to find out about it, he was in the lumber office in Craig, Ora Harris' Lumber Company, and Ora Harris was talking to another customer in there telling him about a book he had that he figured Anne Bassett had written. So, Duward didn't say anything while they were talking, and after the man left he asked Mr. Harris, "Have you got that book?" He said, "I'd like to look at it." He said, "I can tell if it's Anne's handwriting or not in it," because she has written us lots of letters and he knew the handwriting. He said, no, he didn't have it, but he figured he had it at home, he didn't know just where, but he would look it up and show it to him sometime.

So, Duward, every time he went to town, he would stop in there and ask him if he had found the book. But he never had, he said, "I think we put it up in the attic," and they looked up in the attic and couldn't find it up there. So, the next time he came in he says, "I think probably my wife, in cleaning out, has thrown it in the dumps." So, we never did see it or find out for sure if it's still in existence. But I saw Ora Harris this summer, he's one of our commissioners, and I saw him when they dedicated the road up here at Minnie's Gap. I asked him about it then, if he had ever run on to it and he said, "Well, I think I have," but I don't know why he wouldn't know if he had. He says, "I think I have, and if I have, and if I can find it," he said, "I'll let you see it or I'll send it to you or something." Of course, I haven't received it. I don't suppose he's found it. I'll ask him again if I ever see him again.

MB: It's too bad that Fitzpatrick or Dunnum can't get a hold of that.

Esther: Yes. Anne wrote a very good story on her life. She called it "Stars and Two Bars" and they started to print that in the Craig paper one year. It was just episodes, a certain amount of it

every week. She was living down in Leeds, Utah, at the time, and she would mail the week's episode to her niece in Craig, Edna Haward, and then Edna would turn it in to the paper. They printed four or five issues of it. I have copies of that, too, that I can show you, I think, if I can locate it.

MB: I saw one sitting on the...Colorado Magazine.

Esther: Well, the Colorado Magazine, I have all of that, yes, but this story of hers she called "Stars and Two Bars" is a little different. It's pretty much the same, but they printed it so long. Then she found out that Edna Bassett, Edna Haward was changing things in it. She didn't like the Bassett publicity and she was changing the things she didn't like in there. So, it made Anne a little angry about it and disgusted with her so she jerked the whole thing back and didn't send them any more. So, they never finished the story.

I have some two to three chapters, probably, out of that book. She sent us the whole book, in fact, one time just written in her notes, typewritten and handwritten, too, that she hadn't published. She never did get it published, but she sent it to us one time because Duward had been to Denver and he met Sam Goldman in Denver and told him about Anne. He was asking about Anne. He wanted to make a life story of Anne on the screen and he wanted pictures, life-size pictures, of Anne. We had a beautiful palomino stallion at the time. He wanted her on that stallion, made life-size, to set in the lobby of the movie house to advertise her picture. Of course, that was just some of the details he was telling Duward of it, but he wanted to know if Duward could get a hold of that story of hers.

So we wrote to Anne, and she said she would send it to us. She did. She mailed it to us, a big thick manuscript, but she said at the same time, "I hope you won't let anyone copy any of this." So we didn't let anyone, we had people offer and wanted to copy it, type it off, but we had promised her we wouldn't, so we didn't, and we didn't even copy it ourselves. We could have, because we had it about two years. We could have copied it off in longhand and saved it, but we didn't think we should, so we didn't do it.

Duward took the manuscript to Denver with him to see Sam Goldman. He met him and he met the man that trains horses for him. He was training then, when the mule team, Borax, the mules for that, talked to them and he was quite enthusiastic about it. So Duward showed him the book, the whole thing and he said, "Well, where do you want me to read?" Duward said, "Just open it up any place, read any part of it."

I don't know which chapter he read, but he read that, and he had been talking to Duward about getting information out of that and then having a ghostwriter write it up. When he got through reading, he said, "That's good enough, we don't need any ghostwriter for that." She was very good about writing, she had a wonderful vocabulary and way of expressing her feelings and so it was good enough.

I have one chapter called "The Gray Wolves" that is very interesting. In this chapter, "The Gray Wolves," she was wanting to trap wolves. There were quite a few wolves in the country at that time. That was when she had the smelter place down below Tepee. She had a little girl, six years old, living with her, or staying with her temporarily, right then. So, they saddled their horses and rode down the draw, below that place, the smelter place, and they came onto tracks where there were wolf tracks going into a den, a hole in the bank there. So, she got off her

horse, left the little girl standing out waiting for her, she got off her horse and started to crawl into this wolf den, hole, and it was pretty hard to crawl because it was downhill. She could crawl in, okay. It was just about the size of her body and she could crawl in. She had some matches with her. When she got down in, it was dark, of course. She would light matches as she went along. She got down into the opening of the den in there and she found two sets of cubs in there, the young ones. One set was half grown and the others were much younger. So, she tried to back out because she was afraid one of the two mothers would be coming home pretty soon and find her in the hole. So, she tried to back out, but it was hard to back uphill backwards on a little slope and dusty, of course, and choky in there. She had on a corset and the corset stays would stick into the

walls of the bank and she would have a hard time pushing herself through.

Finally, she got to where she could call; she was beginning to get scared. She called to the girl who was only six years old, that was Ada Morgan, no the younger girl, her younger sister. I've forgotten her name right now. But she called to her and told her to ride back to the ranch and get the man that was there, a hired man to bring shovels and come and help dig them out. She didn't tell her that she was scared about not getting out herself. She didn't want to scare the girl, so she told this girl to ride back to the ranch, and she [told her to] be sure to follow [the] horse tracks with the shoes, the shod horse tracks because there were lots of loose horses in the area, to be careful about staying on the right trail and get back there and come back just as soon as she could.

She kept trying to get out all the time the girl was gone. The girl said she would go and be careful and try to get back as soon as she could. So, several times she heard horses nicker outside and she thought, "Well, here they are." But it happened to be loose horses that were going by nickering at her horse. So it was sometime, quite a while, before anybody came. So there was a man, or two, maybe just the one man, she could hear him throw the shovel down and he got off. And he says, "All right you can come out now." And she says, "Come out hell! I'm stuck!" So, he had to shovel a little to get her out. Then the first thing she said she did was to go behind a bush and take that corset off and throw it down behind the bush where people in future years would wonder what kind of armor the people in that day wore. I don't know if she ever got the pups out or not, but that was her experience with the gray wolves that time.

MB: She must have been very literate.

Esther: She was. She wrote it so interestingly, you could just feel the story, feel her experience all the way through. She has such a nice way of expressing herself.

The Tepee Ranch where the primitive and the modern meet, where the outstanding Campbells have the tact to keep the beauty of the hills unchanged and live in harmony with the wild creatures of nature. Things that are, like the things that were in deep appreciation of kindness bestowed. ---Anne Bassett Willis

I think she had a wonderful way of expressing herself.

MB: How far back do your guest books go?

Esther: Oh, this one started in 1950, but we had another before that I think.

MB: You ought to make copies and give that to the library sometime. Just the people that you've met, that would really be something.

Esther: Copies of the whole thing?

MB: You bet.

Esther: Some library would probably get it, get them. I don't know who else wants them. I never thought what to do with them.

MB: Did Josie ever sign one?

Esther: Yes, it has her signature in here, too. I don't know if I can find it right now. I keep a list of all our visitors since we've been down here, but for quite a while I have a list of my visitors, I call them my people days. Most of them are people that just stopped for a visit or a cup of coffee or cup of tea or something. But if they stay overnight, I count them the second day, too, or for a weekend, as long as they stay I count them. Here's one since 1970. They are growing bigger all the time.

MB: That is astounding.

Esther: Yes, there's lots of people stop. Lots of them, of course, I know. They are friends of mine.

But lots of them are strangers. But here I have things to look at, I have my rock gardens, some of them want to look at that and some want to look at my Indian collection. I have a little room over in the rock house there that I've made into sort of a museum. It doesn't have a whole lot in, but people are interested in looking, so they, some people, will tell others and they come and want to see what's here.

MB: Where did that bell come from, out there?

Esther: It was given to me by the school district. It was south of Craig at the Lloyd School, it was an oil camp. They "automized" the camp so that it took only one man to push the buttons, to do things, so they transferred all the helpers, all the men, to other camps and, of course, that did away with the school. Nobody would go to school anymore, so they gave me the bell as a going away present from the Lloyd School, north of Craig, about 22 miles north of Craig.

MB: Could we look at some of your things outside? I'd love to see those.

Esther: Sure.